

PET

EXPRESS MAIL NO. EV307545969US

PTO/SB/21 (08-03)

Approved for use through 07/31/2006. OMB 0651-0 031

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**TRANSMITTAL
FORM**

(To be used for all correspondence
after initial filing)

Application Number	10/660,020
Filing Date	September 11, 2003
First Named Inventor	Jeffrey T. Ranney
Group Art Unit	
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket No.	210401-96

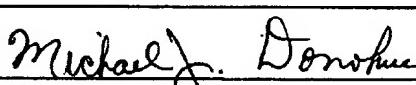
ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Attached
<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment/Response
<input type="checkbox"/> After Final
<input type="checkbox"/> Affidavits/declaration(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request
<input type="checkbox"/> Express Abandonment Request
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement; Form PTO-1449
<input type="checkbox"/> Cited References
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts under 37 C.F.R. 1.52 or 1.53
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts/Incomplete Application | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Request for Corrected Filing Receipt
<input type="checkbox"/> Licensing-related Papers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Petition
<input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Convert to a Provisional Application
<input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation, Change of Correspondence Address
<input type="checkbox"/> Declaration
<input type="checkbox"/> Statement under 37 CFR 3.73(b)
<input type="checkbox"/> Terminal Disclaimer
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Entity Statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Request for Refund | <input type="checkbox"/> CD(s), Number of CD(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Board of Appeals and Interferences
<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Group (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief)
<input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary Information
<input type="checkbox"/> Status Letter
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt Postcard
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Enclosure(s) (please identify below):

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|---|---|--|

Remarks

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT

Individual Name	Michael J. Donohue	22504
Signature		
Date	December 1, 2003	

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION/MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date specified below.

Typed or printed name		
Signature		Date:

WARNING: Information on this form may become public. Credit card Information should not be included on this form. Provide credit card Information and authorization on PTO-2038.

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.6. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14.



EXPRESS MAIL NO. EV307545969US

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Jeffrey T. Ranney
Application No. : 10/660,020
Filed : September 11, 2003
For : NANOFILTER SYSTEM AND METHOD OF USE

Docket No. : 21401-96
Date : December 1, 2003

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.102 AND MPEP § 708.02-V
AND MPEP § 708.02-VI

Dear Sir:

The Applicant kindly requests that the Commissioner grant a petition to make special in the above-referenced matter. The application is entitled to a special status under MPEP 708.02-V because it materially enhances environmental quality and is also entitled to special status under MPEP 708.02-VI because it materially contributes to the development of alternative energy resources.

Enhancement of Environmental Quality

The application is entitled to special status under MPEP 708.02-V because it materially enhances the quality of the environment.

The application is directed to a technology in which biomass products, generally cellulose products that would otherwise be considered waste material, and converts the biomass to sugars that may typically be used to produce ethanol. The current technology for biomass conversion uses an acid that becomes contaminated with the sugar product. The current technology is incapable of purifying the acid for reuse and must treat the contaminated acid with water and a base solution to neutralize

it and dispose of treated acid within the environment. The current technology thus utilizes large amounts of water and cannot recycle the contaminated acid and thus must dispose of the acid within the environment.

The technology described within the pending application provides a technique for purification of the acid to an extent that does not require disposal of the acid within the environment. Rather, the acid is purified to a stage where it can be recycled for subsequent biomass conversion. Thus, the technology of the pending application permits the efficient conversion of waste products (cellulose) to sugar for the production of useful products (e.g., ethanol). The process further conserves water and avoids the disposal of treated acid in the environment by treating and recycling acid. Accordingly, the application is entitled to special status under MPEP 708.02-V.

The application is also entitled to special status under MPEP 708.02-VI because it materially contributes to the development of energy resources. As noted above, the present invention is directed to technology involved in biomass conversion. The present technology results in sugar contaminated acid that must be neutralized and disposed in the environment. The present invention increases the sugar recovery and thus the efficiency of biomass conversion for the ultimate production of ethanol. The filtration process described in the pending application provides a greater degree of separation of sugar and acid and thus provides more sugar for the ethanol conversion process. In addition to the improvement to the environment, discussed above, the present invention leads to greater efficiency and production of ethanol. Accordingly, the application is entitled to special status under MPEP 708.02-VI.

No fee is required for the present petition under either category in which the present application is entitled to special status.

The applicant kindly requests that the present application be made special. If questions remain regarding the requested special status, the Petition Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (206) 628-7640.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey T. Ranney
Davis Wright Tremaine LLP

Michael J. Donohue
Michael J. Donohue
Registration No. 35,859

MJD:gatc

2600 Century Square
1501 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98101-1688
Phone: (206) 622-3150
Fax: (206) 628-7699

1424724_1.DOC 21401-96